The Authors Appeal.

LO here (as priſoner at the bar) I ſtand,
Criticks command me, to hold up my hand;
They ſay I am arraign'd; I need no Cook
To draw my charge, it follows in my Book;
No Bradſhaw *to condemn; for there's a crew,*
Cry burn the book, and hang the Author too.

But Reader *ſtay, if needs* I *muſt be tryed;*
The Welſhman's Jury ſhall not be deny'd,
The twelve Apoſtles. If then I *have writ*
Things Heterodox, *or my unhappy wit*
Doth contradict their Doctrine, Let *me be*
Cenſur'd by them, but not condem'd by thee.

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THE PRESBYTERIAN BRAMBLE OR A SHORT DISCOURSE OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

By L. G.

Judges 9. 15.

And the bramble ſaid unto the trees, if in truth ye annoint me King over you, then come, and put your truſt in my ſhadow and if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.

Matthew 7. 16.

Ye ſhall know them by their fruits; do men gather Grapes of Thornes or Figs of Thiſtles?

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THE

PRESBYTERIAN BRAMBLE.

THat which was once the contention of the Disciples of Christ, hath ever since continued the common dispute of the World, *viz.* a striving *who should be the greatest*; & this controversie hath not only set Nation against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom; (as it was when *Alexander* and *Darius* strove who should be Cock of the Worlds dunghil) but it hath also occasioned Civil and Domestick broiles, where haughty and perverse spirits have gone about to maintain their Principles by bloody Arguments. *Nec Cæsar ferre Priorem, &c.*

Our blessed Lord commands us to dispute upon another question that is, to strive who should be the least.

If this Rule were but well observed, if Greatnesse would but make way for Goodnesse, and Pride give the wall to Humility, we should then see glorious Times, and a happy Reformation.

But unto whom shall I compare the men of this Generation? I may justly say (with our Saviour) *They are like unto Children play-*

ing in the Market place, and saying, We have piped and ye have not danced; It is the ambition of Great persons that others should dance after their pipes.

There are in this Kingdom some Children in understanding (I dare not say in innocence) who cry out they will play no more at Bishops, neither will they indure the musick of *Organs*; but rather dance an other Scotch jigg after the *Presbyterian* Bag-pipes. Is it so beloved? marry God forbid.

We have had too much of that already; for give me leave to tell you Your musick was like the musick of *Nero* who played upon his harp when he had set *Rome* on fire; and your dancing like the dancing of *Herodias*; for the best of Kings paid as dear for the one as the Greatest of Prophets for the other.

But I hope we shall have no more such *Galliards*, but that the Parliament will think upon the former musick, and take care to pay the pipers.

That we live under a Government both Civil and Ecclesiastical; and that in both these, the King next unto God is over all persons, and in all causes in these his Majesties Dominions supream head and Governour, is a Principle which all sober men own. And that under God, and his Vice-gerent the King, the Hierarchy of Bishops ought to Govern the Church, is a truth sufficiently proved and illustrated by many learned pens; and that the factious Presbyterians who endeavour to subvert Episcopacy, and to assume unto themselves the like authority under an other name, are not (as they pretend) the Ministers of Christ, I here call Gods sacred word to witnesse.

We are to live under a Governmernt; for the Holy Spirit commands us, to *obey the higher powers*, to give *Cæsar his due*, to *fear God and honour the King*; which are two inseparable duties; He cannot be a good Christian that is not a good Subject; for we may use the same Argument concerning fear, honour and obedience, which the Apostle doth concerning love, *He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen.* So

he that honoureth not the King, who is his visible God, cannot fear God, who is his invisible King.

VVhen *Adam* strove to be equal with his Creator, he was no longer suffered to continue in Paradise; when Traytors strive to be equal with their Soveraign, they are no longer worthy to live upon the earth, but as infected members speedily to be cut off, *Ne pars sincera trahatur.*

This indeed is a truth, which men will not (or at least dare not) deny. Monarchy they embrace, but Prælacy they abhor; and though they kneel to the Crown yet they scorn to bow to the Miter, and the silly Countrymen are perswaded that Episcopacy is the sister of Popery, and therefore they are loth to pin their faith upon lawn sleeves; And this foolish misconstruction is wrought, by some of our modern Pharises, *who strain at a Gnat and swallow a Camel*; and although they cannot relish the Bishops, yet could make shift to devour their lands. And therefore for the defence of Prælacie, I shall make use of two weapons, Scripture and Reason, which no man that is either Rational or Religious, will call unlawful.

That which is lawful for others to desire, is lawful for the King and Parliament to grant, (this is reason) *If a man desireth the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work* (this is Scripture. Now that which is good to be desired is good to be granted, And *if he that desireth the office of a Bishop, desireth a good work*; then they who desire the distructrion of Bishops, and the utter abolishing of that office, do certainly desire an evill work.

The Office of a Bishop we may partly read in his name, that is, an Overseer; here are in a Parish Officers called Overseers of the poor, even such are the Bishop in the Church of Christ.

Our Lord and Master to prove his Divinity tells the Disciples of *John* of his wonderful works; and that which he did unto mens bodies when he was in the flesh, the same he doth now unto their souls, *viz. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the Leapers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospell preached unto them.*

True

True it is that we are all naturally blind in our understanding, and lame in our practices, and it is none but Christ that can make us see clearly or walk uprightly; he washed the Leprous sinner in his own blood. He gives unto those who are deaf unto any thing which is good, hearing ears; and raises up those who are dead in sins and trespasses, unto a newness of life; And lastly, wherein all the rest of the miracles are summed up, πτωχοι ευαγγελιζονται that is, the Poor are Gospeliz'd, or made conformable unto the Gospel; and for this purpose hath God appointed these Bishops or Overseers, that those who are poor both in spirit and purse, may have the bread of life broken unto them. It is the duty of a faithful servant to give unto his Masters household their meat in due season; *blessed is he whom his Lord shall find so doing.*

A Bishop must be blameless, the Husband of one Wife, Vigilant, Sober, of good behaviour, given to Hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient; not a brawler, not covetous, &c. I heartily wish that the Ministers of *England* would leave off to dispute concerning the office, and strive rather to obtain the qualifications.

Neither have the Apostles words been as a rule without any examples; but the Primitive and late times have both been pregnant of such Bishops, who have taken the degrees of Apostle and Martyr in this world and afterward commenced Saints in another; We need to look no further back then Queen *Maries* reign, and there behold the constant sufferings and glorious Martyrdom of *Cranmer*, *Hooper*, *Ridly* and *Latimer*, all four Bishops; And for shining lights in the Church, we have *John Jewel*, and *John Davenant*, both Bishops of *Sarum*, *Lancelet Andrews* Bishop of *Winchester*, *Joseph Hall* Bishop of *Norwich*, and others now living, of whose learned and pious works the greatest of their Enemies daily make use, although they cast dirt upon the Authors; Base, ungratefull Spirits who go about to cut down the trees when they have filled their budgets with the fruit.

Well

Well, ſay the *Zealots* of the times, we acknowledg all this; Biſhops, with theſe qualifications, we admit but no Lord Biſhops; it ſeems then their greatneſs is their crime; and becauſe the height of *Grantham* ſteeple makes it look crooked, it muſt therefore be pulled down. Thus it hath been alwayes the policy of the Devil and wicked men to keep Miniſters poor, that they might either ſink under their ſufferings, or be Contemptible in the ſight of the people. It is not long ſince black-coats gave the wall to red-coats, and old *Tullies Cedant arma Togæ* were out of date; and could the malice of men have prevailed, thoſe that now ſerve at the altar of God, had been made hewers of wood and drawers of water; And there had been as little Lordſhip belonging to a Biſhop as Grace to a Presbyterian. But it hath pleaſed our gracious King to ſhew his love unto Chriſt by honouring his Embaſſadours; and unto thoſe to whom God hath given the gifts of Biſhops, hath he given the titles of Lords. *And therefore Why do the people rage? Why do they imagine a vain thing?* Let dogs bark at the Moon, and fools throw ſtones againſt the Wind: Yet they that are of God; will ſtand.

Thus (in this great Eccleſiaſticall combate) we have taken a view of one of our Champions, that is *David*, the Biſhop, or Evangelicall Shepheard, and the manner of his coming, that is in the name of the Lord.

But now enter *Goliah*, a thing of ſix cubits, a prieſt Rampant, *Simeon* and *Levi*, the word and ſword quartered in a ſhield, a long tuck, a buffe coat, and a white-leather conſcience; look upon him Reader. Is he moſt like a ſheep, or wolfe?

We are commanded not to believe every ſpirit, but have *liberty to try the Spirits*; and there is no other way of triall then by the Scriptures, the old and new Teſtaments.

The beſt way of old Teſtament triall, is to take them up into Mount *Carmel*, where *Elijah* contended with *Baals* prophets, we may there obſerve two things in *Baals* prophets, which are exactly parallel'd in the Presbyterians.

1. *Baals* Prophets were bauling prophets, they *cryed out and propheſied from morning to evening.*

So were the Presbyterians, witneſs their Faſts and tedious Lectures, which were but like the *Jews new Moons and appointed feaſts*, and the Phariſes *almes and long prayers*, *an abomination in the ſight of the Lord*; for it is a fearfull thing when Mens ſins cry louder for Judgement, then their prayers for mercy, and when the hands which they lift up are *full of blood.*

2. *Baals* prophets were cutting prophets; they cut, and flaſh't themſelves with knives and lancers; So were the Presbyterians, witneſs *Worceſter* fight, and the riſing of Sir *George Booth*, when the very Prieſts were in actuall armes, blowing up the coals of diviſion amongſt us, which was no other then to make the body Politick of this Nation (after the manner of *Baals* worſhip) to cut and wound her ſelf with ſwords and inſtruments of cruelty. There is a bleſſed ſentence, *Mathew* 5. 9. *Beati ſunt Pacifici*, how little ſhare have theſe men in that Beatitude!

Be wiſe now therefore ye men of *England*; *If the* Lord *be God, follow him, but if* Baal *be God, follow him*; *Halt no longer between two opinions*; Is there a greater contradiction in Lord Biſhop, then in Captain Parſon? do you deteſt a ſurplice and hug a coat of mail? is not a tippet more decent then a belt of Bandeleers? is not *Davids* muſick more pleaſant then that of drums and trumpets? A true Miniſter hath no other ſword ſave that of the ſpirit, no other ſheild ſave that of faith; yet in his ſcrip he hath ſo much learning and piety, as (like the ſmooth ſtones of the brook) ſhall wound the brazen foreheads of all his proud gainſayers.

But beſides this, there is a new Teſtament Trial; They who are the diſciples of Chriſt, obey their Maſters commands; the command is to ſtay there where the place is worthy; and where it is not, to be gone; now I appeal to the experience of the Country, whether or no the Presbyterians obeyed this; they looked not at the worth of the people, but at the value of the yearly ſtipend; how common and frequent was it to ſee ſome coveteous young Novice

vice placed amongſt worthy Neighbours, having a competent allowance (had he known what a competence was) but hearing of a wealthy perſonage, *Præſto* Sir *John*; away flyes he, and leaves *Ninive* to go to *Tarſhiſh*! It was therefore an ingenious anſwer of a North Country Man to Mr. *Vicar*, who asked of him *what is the chief end of Man?* he replyed, To run from a ſmall benefice to a great one. For ſurely that hath been the end of theſe ſons of *Belial* who (though they call themſelves the Ambaſſadours of Chriſt) yet they never obey'd their Commiſſion, but in Gods livery ſerved *Mammon*.

Thus we have ſpoken of the way of *Cain*, that is their cruelty; and of the errour of *Balaam* that is their coveteouſneſs; we ſhall now conſider the gainſaying of *Korah*; What ſtrange fire did they offer at Gods altar! How often might you have gone to the place of publick worſhip, and heard neither the Lords prayer, the Decalogue of *Moſes*, nor the Apoſtles Creeds, without which we know not how to pray; what to do, or what to believe.

Our Saviour Chriſt teacheth us how to pray, both negatively and poſitively; Not like the Phariſees, but after this manner; The Presbyterians pray'd not in the words of Chriſt, but like thoſe Hippocrites uſed vain Repetitions; and therefore it is now time for them to ſay we have left undone thoſe things which we ought to have done, and We have done thoſe things which we ought not to have done. It was *Moſes* his Plea unto God when he was to be ſent into *Ægypt*, *I am not eloquent*; perhaps he foreſaw the perverſeneſs of the men of this age, who thought him not eloquent enough to ſpeak in their Congregation; Yet when the ruler demanded of *Jeſus*, *What he ſhould do to inherit eternal life*; He replyed, *Thou knoweſt the Commandements, &c.*

In the twelfth chapter of the book of the *Revelation*, we read of a Woman *cloathed with the Sun, having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve ſtars*; This Woman is the Church of God, the Sun is the Sun of Righteouſneſs, the Moon is this unconſtant World, the crown of twelve ſtars is the doctrine of the A-

poſtles, The Symbolum Apoſtolicum is very true believers Diadem; but it is no wonder that that hand which robb'd the King of his Crown, ſhould alſo deprive the Church of hers.

I confeſs, I am loth to uſe ſuch tart expreſſions; but I hope I may (without offence) defend the truth with ſuch blowes as others give who fight againſt it.

I do remember that in the heat of theſe late wars, There was publiſhed a ſeditious Libel called The ſimple Cobler, &c. wherein amongſt other Conumdrums there was a Phanatical (I ſhould have ſaid prophetical) diſtich. *Viz.*

There are a ſet of Biſhops coming next behind,
That will ride the Divell off his legs, and break his wind.

Indeed ſuch ugly words cannot deſerve a comment, yet we may correct an erratum; for Biſhops read Presbyterians. All the Kingdom knowes that they were the rank riders. But how has the foul fiend played the Hobgobblin with them! how do they now tumble in the mire, who lately ſate in the ſaddle! poor *Hugh Peters* fell ſo that his neck was broken; others are crippled, both in their Eſtates and opinions; and they may have all time to ſpend that under the Divels belly, which they got upon his back. But how the Divel ſhould become broken-winded I know not, unleſs it was done when *O. C.* rode poſt into another World.

But ſtay my over haſty pen! I fear I have writ ſomething that will not ſuit with the genius of ſober men. The naked truth needs no ſuch antick dreſs; Divinity and Drollery are an unlawfull mixture; And therefore it becomes me to beg pardon of the impartial reader, and withall to ſignifie that by the vvord Presbyterian, I do not mean all that are ſo called, far be it from me to go about to ſtain the reputation of any Godly and Learned Miniſters, as *Baxter*, *Calamy* and others, whoſe piety and pains in the Church of God have deſerved the praiſe of all good men; *bene vir, hoc nihil ad te.* But as for thoſe ſeditious ſpirits that were Incendiaries in

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the old rebellion, and would novv begin a nevv, that take upon them the name Presbyterian only to fight againſt Prælacy (for ſo the builders of *Babel* vvere confounded in their language) Indeed the vvord Presbyter had at firſt a good ſignification, as Tyrant, Magick, and other vvords, vvhich through the corruption of Men have loſt their old Etymology; Tyrant anciently did ſignifie a King, but novv it ſignifies an *Oliver*; Magick formerly ſignified Philoſophy, but novv it is taken for Witch-craft; and the name Presbyter vvas once an Elder, but now it is uſed for a Scotch Rebell, or an Engliſh Traitour. It is obſerved that once a great faſhion in this Nation, vvas, to vvear yellovv ſtarched Ruffes. But after one Mrs. *Turner* (a notorious Witch, and ſtrumpet, vvas hanged vvith one of them about her neck, the mode became odious and vvas quite left off. Truly Reader, I think it is high time for us to lay aſide the name Presbyterian vvhich is nothing but a ſtarched piece of Auſterity, becauſe *Hugh Peters* (vvho poyſoned more with his doctrine then Mrs. *Turner* with her potions) wore it (as a livery) when he went to the gallowes,

I think it is high time for *England* to begin to be ſober, and every man to bring his heart as a ſtone to the ſpiritual building of the Church of Chriſt? without repentance and ſelf-denyal, the ſtones cannot be hewn and made fit for the Fabrick; without faith they cannot be built up; without love they cannot be joyned and cemented; without decency, order and Government, there will ſtill be a confuſion, and not one ſtone left upon another.

For this end there is a neceſſity of Epiſcopacy, experience hath taught us the inconvenience of Presbytery. For though *I* dare not call them the ſons of perdition, I may confidently ſay they are the fathers of Confuſion.

It is reported of a Grave Senator of the Rump Parliament, that He ſat many years in the houſe, and yet (like *Balaams* Aſſe) he never ſpake but once, and when he ſpake his words were theſe, Mr. *Speaker, I conceive it is neceſſary that we cauſe the window to be ſhut.* Doubtleſſe theſe words could not gain his worſhip the reputation

putation of an Oratour, but had the Parliament been then consulting about *Church Government*, his advice had been then as excellent as it is now ridiculous, that is, to cause that window to be shut by a wholesome Law, that had been too long held open by toleration of Opinions and Liberty of Conscience.

I shall conclude with the words of a famous Divine, which were part of his last prayer, *Lord strike through the reins of those who rise up against the Church and King; make them as chaff before the wind, and as stubble before the fire; but upon himself and his seed let his Crown flourish.*

Wharton.

WHat changelings where the Presbyterian crew,
That pull'd old crosses down, to build up new?
That durst adventure on such dangerous shelves,
As to unsaint th' Evangelists themselves,
And left us not a Festival beside:
What they had called and had sanctifi'd.
But heav'ns are just, for lo they're forc'd to bow;
The Synods down, and stinking Elders too:
Only they bark at moonshine now and then,
To shew that they are Dogs rather then Men.

The Authors Eccho.

THen down with 'um, let them no longer stand,
Base caterpillers that consum'd the land,

That

That rent the common-prayer book and lawn ſleeves,
And made the houſe of God a Den of thieves.
O may the ſacred Pulpit now be free
From ſuch Quacksalvers in Divinitie!
Let 'um be Pedagogues oth' laſhing trade,
And whip their boyes as C------ did his Maid;
Or elſe return unto there Zealous Tub,
And their be Chaplains to Don Belzebub.

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FINIS.